

FEB 19 1954

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT : Reduction in Cable Traffic

I. PROBLEM

Devise ways and means to obtain more substantive compliance with provisions of [redacted] Cable Procedures "Reducing Cable Traffic," issued 17 April 1953 by DCI. Said Notice directed a 25% reduction in CIA cable traffic volume, to be accomplished by diverting to pouch facilities all correspondence not requiring the most expeditious handling.

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II. FACTS BEARING ON THE PROBLEM

The reduction of cable traffic volume must be attacked on a three-fold basis: (a) elimination of non-essential cable traffic and using the dispatch medium therefore; (b) practicing the greatest economy of words for those messages deemed essential for cable communications; (c) elimination to the greatest degree possible of "book" and "multiple addressee" cables, principally of the "info" variety. In addition to the attention being given this problem by the Office of the Inspector General, two other undertakings are in existence which may be of assistance in accomplishing the common goal: (a) a study by the Office of Communications on behalf of DDCI which is designed to present statistics on the true originators of cable traffic, e.g., of the 100% traffic going to the FE Area, how much has the Area Division originated, how much by SR Division, how much by the Senior Staffs, etc.; (b) a study by the Management Improvement Staff on behalf of the Cable Secretariat which attempts "to evaluate the feasibility of instituting [redacted] procedure, and if such a procedure is found to be feasible and desirable to recommend the means of implementing such a procedure. (A [redacted] may be described as a communication which is typed on a form which incorporates a reproducible master. It is transmitted between Headquarters and the field and receives simultaneous mailing distribution at Headquarters.)"

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[redacted] Cable Procedures "Reducing Cable Traffic" stated that the Department of State had initiated a program requiring a 25% reduction in the number of cable messages as well as a similar reduction in cable words or group-count and indicated it was "imperative that a similar reduction be made in CIA cable traffic."

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Since the promulgation of the DCI's Notice in April re cable traffic, there has been little substantive accomplishment in reducing cable traffic per se, nor has there been any discernible pattern amongst the relationships, either increase or decrease, of number of cables, total group-count of cables, and number of dispatches. During the period concerned, the only discernible factor is that there appears to be a minor lessening of total amount of all communications between Headquarters and the field, but the total volume of the three elements concerned, i.e., cables, group-counts and dispatches continue to fluctuate with no relationship.

III. DISCUSSION

Various factors present themselves by which the non-substantive reduction of cable traffic since April 1953 can at least be rationalized. The factors are not given in any order of priority because they are such that it is difficult to single out their respective weight. Some of these factors are: (a) when a reduction in cable traffic is desired the usual tendency is to so state but not to accompany the statement with constructive suggestions as to how the reduction can be accomplished; (b) there exists an undeniable cable psychology, the operation of which connotes two things to the mind of the cable writer the message will get there quicker and be seen by higher levels of authority; (c) promulgation of directives to reduce cable traffic are not accompanied by "follow through procedures" to insure that the desired reduction is forthcoming; (d) the relatively long-time period to transmit dispatches plus the amount of time it takes from the point where a division writes dispatches and it goes through the coordination process and finally arrives at Registry for transmittal, appears to discourage a certain amount of dispatch traffic; (e) the tendency of individuals to allow incoming dispatch and/or cable traffic to go unanswered for such a period of time that it then becomes necessary to send a cable answer in an endeavor to recoup lost time; (f) a lack of understanding on the part of cable originators as to what they are actually requesting of COMMO when they request voluminous "info." distribution; (g) dependence upon a written Agency publication, only one of a tremendous number issued in the last year, to get to the attention of all interested parties and to have sufficient impact upon such parties to accomplish its purpose; (h) the tendency to put major emphasis on cable reduction in Headquarters and not put comparable pressure upon the field to reduce volume.

While the aggregate of all the above problems appears formidable, many of them can be singularly attacked and overcome. Within this Agency the problem is so vast in scope and historical in nature that it is not believed any one publication will reverse the present situation.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

It is believed that the problem can best be approached by the establishment of short-term and long-term goals. Short-term goals are those whereby certain steps can be taken immediately to acquaint cable originators with the extent of the problem non-essential cable traffic creates, and to give them certain constructive advice as to how to reduce cable traffic immediately. Long-term goals are those wherein more systematic approaches will have to be devised in order to continue the decrease brought about by the short-term goals.

Past studies from both the Office of Communications and Cable Secretariat are conclusive proof that by far the vast majority of cable traffic originates within DD/P, and that the majority of DD/P traffic is of an operational nature being neither administrative nor intelligence exclusively. This being the case, it appears logical to assume that DD/P has a major responsibility to develop determinations as to what type of cable traffic can, on a continuing basis, be diverted to a dispatch medium. If the DD/P organization fails in the discharge of this responsibility, then there appears little alternative but to establish a maximum or target word-count quota on a monthly basis for each foreign division.

Greater responsibilities must be assumed by cable releasing officers and they, in effect, must represent the "follow through" which is essential to the accomplishment of any directive. In order to impress upon them their responsibility and to help equip them to discharge it, they should be addressed by individuals at the level of COP/DDP and AD/CO. COP should stress to them the administrative necessity of complying with the DCI's directive and inform them that in discharging their responsibilities his office stands ready to be of assistance. AD/CO, within the limits of COMMO security, should be frank in his discussion as to the relay problems, including enciphering and deciphering, that are caused by the sending of "info" messages. Anything that can be done to speed the internal routing of dispatches should be undertaken including a most searching examination by the divisions themselves as to whether or not their present systems are guilty of needless delays in forwarding dispatches from the desks of originators to Registry.

From the point of view of long-term goals, it is concluded that the following action should be taken. It is understood that the Signal Center of the Office of Communications has undertaken the compilation of a glossary of accepted abbreviations and contractions for cable traffic purposes. Such an undertaking should, if possible, be extended and at the earliest date formalized into official Agency policy. The aforementioned study by MIS on the use of "pouchgrams" should be closely followed and, perhaps, a "pilot plant" operation on a division basis might be undertaken. A thorough analysis of the necessity for and the results of frequent and

voluminous use of the sending of "info" copies of cables should be undertaken leading toward a discovery of other alternative means of accomplishing the same end, i.e., cable to a Senior Representative and lateral dispatching to field stations from the Senior Representative's headquarters, etc.

While the intent of [redacted] was and is to effect a 25% reduction in CIA cable traffic, the fact that the Department of State has already initiated a program and accomplished a 25% reduction in their traffic makes it imperative that, at the earliest moment, we effect a counterpart reduction of that cable traffic [redacted]

[redacted] The means established to accomplish the reduction of that traffic [redacted] should have an equal lessening effect [redacted]

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That DCI direct an intensified approach on the part of DD/P, DD/A and AD/CO be taken to the solution of this problem and, to the degree necessary, the participation of DD/I. That such approach include the discharge of the following points:

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constructive suggestions and guidance as to what type traffic can be diverted from cable to dispatch medium and that COP further request releasing officers to submit their suggestions on cable reduction matters.


c. That DD/P and DD/A re-examine their procedures for expeditious handling of incoming dispatch material, to insure its arrival at an action point at the earliest moment; they re-examine the existence of a tickler system to insure speedy answer to dispatch by dispatch; that they re-examine the procedures by which dispatches are routed and coordinated between the point of origin and arrival at the proper Registry for overseas dispatching.

d. That AD/CO and the Cable Secretary be directed to proceed with the direction and publication of a standardized abbreviations list to include contractions foremost commonly used phraseology.

e. That the Cable Secretary attempt to expedite the publication and dissemination of a cable writing handbook which presently is in the coordination process.


f. That within ninety days from the approval of this study that if there is not accomplished a sizeable reduction of cable traffic, that DCI instruct the Cable Secretary to establish maximum quotas on a word-count basis for the various units of organization which will represent the required 25% reduction in traffic below the level of April 1953. The establishment of such maximum quotas will not preclude the right to exceed any given quota based on demonstrated operational necessity.

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L. M. B. Kirkpatrick
Inspector General

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APPROVE


Director of Central Intelligence

1 MAR 1954

MEMORANDUM FOR: Direct of Central Intelligence

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Further distribution withheld pending your approval.


LBKirkpatrick

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2 Mar. 54. JF*

24 Feb 54
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